



606.06 Religious Programs

Number Series: 600 - Corrections Division

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606.06-1 Policy

- I. It is the policy of the Hendry County Sheriff's Office to make available to inmates confined in a HCSO Jail facility a range of religious services and programs which, to the extent practical, satisfy the beliefs of most major faith groups confined therein.
- II. The Chaplain, in cooperation with the Jail Administrator, or designee, shall plan and supervise all aspects of religious programs, including approval and training of both lay and clergy volunteers from the community for faiths represented in the inmate population. Prior to assignment each volunteer shall be provided with a standard orientation to the Jail and will sign an acknowledgement of understanding regarding facility rules.
- III. Inmates shall have the opportunity to participate in practices of their religious faith that are deemed essential by the faith's judiciary, limited only by documentation showing threat to the safety of persons involved in such activity or that the activity itself disrupts order in the facility.
- IV. Adequate space and equipment shall be provided for the conduct and administration of religious programs.
- V. The Chaplain shall provide counseling and crisis intervention services when requested by inmates or upon referral from staff.

606.06-2 Procedural Guidelines

- I. Religious programs offered by HCSO will be under the general direction of the Jail Administrator, or designee. The Chaplain will coordinate the equitable delivery of religious services to all inmates.
- II. Religious services and counseling will be available to all inmates.
- III. Inmates desiring the opportunity to participate in religious services deemed essential by the governing body of that faith, (subject to reasonable constraints necessary to ensure the safety of staff, religious workers, and inmates or the Jail's security and good order) must obtain the sanction of the Chaplain.

IV. Inmates will not be compelled to attend any religious program, service, or activity.

606.06-3 Resources

- I. Facilities will be made available for all necessary programs and for all equipment, supplies, investments, and other items incidental and necessary to the religious program.
- II. Ordinarily, religious services and activities will be held in the multipurpose rooms in the facility.
- III. To the degree practical, all faith groups will be granted equal access to the Hendry County Jail for worship activities.
- IV. Inmates may wear one, non-metallic religious medallion or ornament not to exceed 1 1/2 inches in length and only if the medallion or ornament does not interfere with the safe and orderly conduct of the facility.

606.06-4 Staffing

- I. The Chaplain will have a verified clinical pastoral education background and carry the endorsement of a religious certifying body.
- II. Under the supervision and direction of the Chaplain, properly screened, interviewed, and trained volunteers from the community will be used to minister to the various faith groups.
- III. Prior to assignment each volunteer shall be provided with a standard orientation to the Jail facility and will sign an acknowledgement of understanding regarding facility rules.
- IV. When a representative of the faith to which an inmate subscribes is not available in the facility, then to the degree practical, the inmate will be permitted contact with a properly credentialed representative of that faith via visits (**see Section 606.02**), phone, or correspondence.
 - A. The Chaplain may assist the inmate when necessary.
 - B. The representative shall have appropriate credentials from the faith judiciary and may minister to the inmate under the supervision of the Chaplain.
- V. Additional staff resources will be provided to support the facility's religious programs, including clerical support and security staff supervision for selected large-scale activities. Community volunteers will be utilized as appropriate.

606.06-5 Pastoral Services to Inmates

- I. Religious programs in the facility will include, but not be limited to the following:
 - A. Religious services and prayer
 - B. Communion and other sacramental rituals
 - C. Religious education and classes
 - D. Religious counseling
 - E. Choirs, ensembles, and singing groups

- II. A schedule of religious activities will be posted in locations available to inmates. All religious activities will be monitored by security staff.
- III. The Chaplain will have access to all areas of the facility.
- IV. The Chaplain will tour confinement and medical units weekly. Such inmates may also be visited by approved escorted representatives of their faith group.
- V. Activities and staff supervision will, to the extent possible, be equitably allocated among all major faith groups represented in the facility.
- VI. The Chaplain will maintain ongoing communications with community religious groups to ensure facility programs are appropriately managed and that additional resources, when required, are properly credentialed by representatives of that faith group.
- VII. Special religious services may be authorized by the Jail Administrator provided all groups generally have equivalent access to such programs if available. Special diet and religious banquet programs shall be underwritten by the governing body of that faith.
- VIII. Special Religious Diets:
 - A. Special diets for inmates whose religious beliefs require the adherence to religious dietary laws shall have the diets approved by the Chaplain.
 - B. Diet prescriptions shall be specific and complete and furnished in writing to the Contract Food Service manager.
 - C. The diets shall be reviewed and re-written monthly.
 - D. **See Section 604.02.**

606.06-6 Personal Services

- I. The Chaplain will interview inmates referred by Jail staff or inmates requesting such an interview.
- II. Inmates making requests will provide the Chaplain with adequate information to enable the Chaplain to proceed with counseling and crisis intervention in an appropriate manner.
- III. Inmates may request to see the Chaplain. Response to inmate requests will be made as promptly as possible. The urgency of the situation dictates response time.
- IV. The Chaplain will be immediately notified when information is received concerning the death or serious illness of an inmate's family member or events which may be disturbing to the inmate. **See Section 606.09-5, "Inmate Notification."** The Chaplain will notify an inmate of serious illness or death of a family member whenever possible.
- V. The Chaplain will help inmates to locate appropriate community resources when assistance is requested with family and financial affairs.

606.06-7 Publications and Other Materials

- I. The Chaplain, in cooperation with the Jail Administrator or designee, shall develop and maintain communications with faith communities and approve the donation of equipment or materials for use in religious programs.
- II. Inmates may receive, via the Chaplain, religious publications and other materials which do not have security implications.
- III. The Chaplain will solicit materials for all faith groups and in languages represented in inmate populations.
 - A. Incoming items will be opened and inspected per normal package processing procedures.
 - B. The Chaplain will confer with the Jail Administrator, or designee regarding questionable items.

606.06-8 Change of Religious Preferences or Faith

- I. The Chaplain will not attempt to influence an inmate to change religious preference or faith.
- II. If an inmate expresses a desire to change religious preference or faith, the Chaplain will encourage that inmate to consider all implications of such a change.
- III. The inmate must confirm the conversion in a written statement to the Chaplain, citing the former religious designation and the affiliation under which the inmate would like to be converted.

REFERENCES

State/Federal Regulations:
Florida Model Jail Standards

FCAC:
N/A

PREA:
N/A

Forms:
N/A

Other Policy/ Procedure References:
600.00 Table of Content
604.02 Special Medical and Religious Diets
606.02 Visitation
606.09 Inmate Grievance Procedure